

Public Housing Notice 2006-02

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Executive Directors of All Local Housing Authorities,
Regional Non-Profit Housing Agencies & Other Interested Parties

FROM: Carole E. Collins, Director, Bureau of Housing Management

RE: DHCD Procedures for Renting Up Barrier Free Units & Tenant Selection Priorities for Applicants in Nursing Homes, Hospitals & Other Long Term Care Facilities

DATE: March 13, 2006

A group of housing and service providers have been meeting regularly as part of the UMass Medical School System Transformations Grant team. This group is charged with the review of housing and service programs in Massachusetts for the elderly and people with disabilities and to recommend changes so we can better meet the needs of these populations.

At a recent meeting of this group it became clear that a number of people in the housing and service arenas were not aware of some of Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD's) long-standing policies with regard to leasing barrier free units and granting emergency case priority to eligible and qualified applicants from nursing homes, hospitals and other long term care facilities.

Included with this mailing is: a copy of DHCD's 1998 memo which details procedures for leasing barrier free units, and a reissue of the DHCD's notice clarifying tenant selection priority for applicants from nursing homes, hospitals and other long term care facilities. Also included is a list of Independent Living Centers (ILCs) that can assist you in leasing up barrier free units.

Please note that in 1990, language was added to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151B that requires any landlord who has a vacant accessible unit to give 15 days notice of the availability to the central registry of accessible apartments. During such fifteen day notice period, the owner or other person having the right of ownership may lease or agree to lease the unit only if it is to be occupied by a person who is in need of wheelchair accessibility. The central registry is now maintained by CHAPA. When vacancies occur or are about to occur in one of your accessible units, please be sure to provide the requisite notice to the registry know as MassAccess by contacting CHAPA at 18 Tremont Street, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02108 (617-742-0820).

Executive Directors and LHA staff having questions should call the LHA's housing management specialist. Others having questions, please feel free to call me at (617) 573-1210.